

# The Orbit

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF  
TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
ALTOONA PA  
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March/April 2026

"Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And can any of you, by worrying, add a single hour to your span of life? And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, you of little faith?"

Matthew 6: 26-30



## **From the Pastor:**

This passage is used mostly to encourage people, not to worry, because God is with us and God is taking care of us. We need to be reminded of this time and time again in our lives. These words are especially meaningful to me at this time of year. Spring is arriving, the grass is starting to get green, lambs are being born, the robins are back, and the temperatures are rising. And yet, in the month of March and the beginning of April, there are still cold days, and the leaves are not back on the trees, and there is still a threat of an early spring snowstorm. Life is like this, it's easy when things are going good, when life is working out just as we planned, to know that God is with us and that we should not worry about the things that God has in control. Yet, life has a way of turning us upside down, of reminding us that bad things can and do happen, that our plans can take a side trip due to illness, loss of jobs, or family problems. When this occurs, it is harder to admit that God is in control; it is harder not to worry. In fact, many of us spend sleepless nights worrying. Life is like early spring, full of potential but not always what we want. Our reading from Matthew reminds us, however, that no matter what season we are in, including the seasons of our lives, God is in control, and God will provide. The grass will get green, the robins will sing, the temperatures will warm up, and God will always be near.

Peace,



## Trinity Council President

### Trinity Council President

By the time you read this, we will be a couple of weeks into the Lenten season. Depending on the mail, the clocks may have already changed, and we're getting that sweet, sweet extra hour of daylight. And hopefully the weather's starting to feel like Spring.

Hello from the other side! It's mid-February for me, and we're finally having some warmer weather other than what seemed like weeks of temperatures below freezing (and some days wayyy below freezing!). So I will take it!

Ash Wednesday is just around the corner as I write this. Every year, I struggle to come up with something to 'give up' for Lent. And to be honest, I don't really have any ideas for this year either.

I remember one year, my Aunt Bev, instead of giving up something, went to church every morning. I loved that idea: instead of giving something up, she gave a little extra of herself.

So what could I do? What could any of us do to give a little extra of ourselves this Lenten season? To a friend or neighbor? Or giving a little more of our time, talent, and treasure at church? A little can go a long way, especially in these times.

I want to wish everyone a happy and joyous Easter! In this Lenten season, as we prepare to celebrate Christ's resurrection, I think of what the pastor tells us at the beginning of each week:

Let us prepare our hearts and minds for worship.

Dave Mueller



## Trinity Letter from Council Member

### A Letter from a Council Member

It's hard to believe that as I write this letter, it's about at the end of February 2026 already. This new year is just plain flying by. As you are reading this in March, Lent has already started with our two services each Wednesday, along with our regular weekend services, Saturday and Sunday.

Again this year, we are doing the Easter for Eli Baskets. It is just wonderful to see the contributions this project receives from the Trinity members and others. This great project touches so many kids' lives throughout the states and is just plain overwhelming, and we can be very happy to be involved in this worthy cause. Here at Trinity, we do a lot of good projects for many worthwhile services for the community. Many of these projects are brought to our attention by the Social Ministries Group and other members of our congregation. We are very thankful for everything that is done here at Trinity, for sure.

January was a rough month with the crazy snowfall that we received and especially the cold weather that has lingered on. Let's hope that soon passes and we can get some warmer and sunny days so we can get out and enjoy some fresh air, instead of being cooped up in our homes. I knew without a doubt that that furry varmint known as Punxsutawney Phil would see his shadow for 6 more weeks of winter weather. I would personally like to give him a "timeout" for six to eight weeks of sunshine.

Easter is right around the corner, and it will be here before we know it. There will be two services again this year. The Sunrise service at 6:30 a.m., then the Easter breakfast and social time at 8 a.m., before the regular 10:45 a.m. service. I sure hope and pray and ask the Good Lord for a nice sunny and much warmer day. Let's hope you are able to join us for one of these Easter services and bring along a neighbor or friend.

In closing, I, along with the members and council members, would like to wish everybody a Happy Easter and an enjoyable day with your family members. Whether you are visiting, traveling, or having a meal together, let us be thankful for what He did for us, so we could be here.

May your heart find peace in faith, comfort in prayer, and reassurance in knowing that we are never walking alone in our journey. God is always with us.

Yours in Faith,  
Ken Myers



## Trinity Social Ministry and Healthy You

It is time for EASTER FOR ELI. We have collected the “bags” and some baskets. This year the bags are green and purple (last year they were pink and blue). The bags and baskets will be on the table in the Sunday School room. You can use either color. The tags will also be there to be placed around the string of the cord. The tags will designate boy or girl and the ages. If you choose to take a basket please take the sticker for boy or girl and the age you have chosen.

Thank you,  
Sharon

Along with Healthy You, we will also be placing small “bears” around the church. If you know someone who is sick, sad or someone with an impaired mental state, please take one and give to that person as a “pick me up” and puts a smile on their face. I’m sorry to say they are **not toys to be played with.**

WE have received a donation to the church to be used at our discretion. After much discussion and along with Healthy You, we have decided to start a fund for the Painting of the Outside of the church. Our goal has not yet been decided on. So we will keep you informed. If you would like to add to our donation, please put in a separate envelope and mark it PAINTING.

Hope everyone has a Happy and Healthy Easter.  
May God Bless You,  
Sharon Kutz



# Trinity Worship and Music

January 13, 2026

Pastor Eli, Debbie Garritano, John Ebersole, Adam Counterman, Cindy Finnegan

## January

4  
11  
18  
25

## February

1  
8  
15  
18 Ash Wednesday 12:00 noon, 6:30 p.m.  
22

## March

1  
8 Daylight Savings Time  
15  
22  
29 Palm Sunday

## April

2 Maundy Thursday 12:00 noon and 6:30 p.m.  
3 Good Friday 12:00 noon and 6:30 p.m.  
4 Easter Saturday 6:30 p.m.  
5 Easter 6:30 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.

## Service

Lisa, Nancy and Pastor will work on acolyte list after the New Year.

### Recap of the Christmas services:

Pastor said that the Christmas Eve services went well but the 7:00 was a bit long. Next year we should have two stations for communion, two to pass the host and two for pouring.

Cindy agreed with Pastor and said that the youth would like to play more for the service. We discussed having pre worship music as the people came into the church. Youth and the chimes could play more selections.

### Ideas for next year:

We discussed decorating the church on Christ the King Sunday, the Sunday before Advent. We may be able to get more help from the congregation right after church.

Debbie was very grateful for all the help with undecorating the church. It was so good to see so many participating.

We also discussed Pastor's and Cindy's schedule for next year. Christmas falls on Friday. That would make it very hard for them to go visit family and be back Saturday. The Sunday following Christmas is always Lessons and Carols. We decided to give them that weekend off and members of the committee will help guide the service. Cindy will ask Ralph if he would like to play for that Sunday. There would be a service for 6:30 Saturday and only one service for Sunday at 10:45.

## Flowers

**Judy** – No altar flowers during Lent, February 22 through April 5. Altar flowers begin on April 12.

## Music

**Cindy** – Cindy will not be able to be at the service January 24. She will ask Ralph to play.

**John** – John will be placing an announcement in the bulletin for someone to take the lead for hand chimes.

He is looking to retire and wants someone to take over. He will gladly help prepare the leader and teach them.

**Adam** – Adam did express that the youth really do enjoy playing and would like to play more. Perhaps there could be a time during the year when they could play again.

**Altar** – ciborium: The ciborium (the box that holds the communion wafers) lost the cross that was on the lid. Debbie and Pastor checked to see if it could be repaired and it can't. Debbie researched the cost of a new ciborium and the price ranges from \$500.00 to \$1,500 +. It was decided to leave the ciborium as is. There is no damage to the function of the unit.

**Next meeting: February 10, 2026, at 11:00 a.m.**



# Council Meeting Minutes

## January 2026

### Attendance

#### Present

Pastor Eli  
 Dave Mueller 2026  
 Brenda Adelman, Vice President 2027  
 Debbie Garritano, Secretary 2028

Ken Myers 2026

Nevin Woodring 2027

Pam Mueller 2026  
 Sharon Kutz 2027

Erica Laich 2028  
 Mike Wachter 2028

#### Absent

Ralph Grove, Treasurer

Lisa Bush 2027

Jim Buchanan 2028

Nancy Honecker 2028

### Greetings/Devotions

The meeting was called to order by President, Dave Mueller. We welcomed the new Council members and went around the table and introduced everyone.

Pastor led the group in prayer.

#### Minutes from last meeting

Minutes from the December meeting were read. Ken made a motion to accept the minutes as written. Pam seconded the motion. Motion passed.

The minutes from the Council meetings will now be on the Pulse and at the back of the sanctuary.

#### Treasurer's Report

No report.

#### Pastor Hess' Report

Pastor presented a written report. She gave an overview of her ministry duties. She serves this congregation but is also called to serve the Synod, the greater church, and the community in which she serves. Along with care for our church, she serves on different boards and committees for the community (Improved Dwellings of Altoona, Blair Towers and faith-based roundtable of Operation Our Town) and on Synod and church wide committees.

For the church, she leads three services, Bible Study, Adult Sunday School, chapel for preschool, prayer breakfast, counseling, visiting shut ins, and other duties. Also this month she had three funerals, two hospital visits, and three home visits.

**Property** – Adam presented a written report. The new railing on the alley side has been installed. The old ones will be removed when the weather is better. Had Roto Rooter come and snake the drain in the women's bathroom. The old terra cotta pipes have shifted and will need to be replaced. He will keep flushing the pipes till they can be repaired.

Two pieces of fascia blew off the 6<sup>th</sup> St. side. He is working on repairing it.

He also noted that he uses his own mower, snowblower, weed eater, and string trimmer for the church. He does not mind using his and only wanted Council to know.

Sharon raised the question that maybe we should have our own church equipment. Following discussion, it was agreed that Adam use his own equipment. However, if something should break while caring for the church, we will replace the part needed.

**Worship and Music** – see attached.

**Christian Ed** – none

**Stewardship** – none

**Social Ministry** – none

**Old Business** –

Personnel Committee has not met yet regarding the Treasurer and Office help.

**Ben Blessed Donations** – Pastor said that the Salvation Army has been in once to take some things out of the garage. She will call again and tell them they have to the end of the month. Mike suggested that we have something in writing to give to the Salvation Army and they would sign it. The lock on the garage will be changed next month.

**New Business**

Debbie passed around the Counting sheet for Council members to sign up to count offering. She will also update the Constitution and By Laws for all members.

Pastor announced that February 7, 2026, Pastor Kevin Shock will be installed as our new Bishop of the Allegheny Synod.

Ken made a motion to adjourn. Sharon seconded. The meeting was then adjourned.

We closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,  
 Debbie Garritano

**Next meeting: February 24, 2026, at 7:00 p.m.**

# Prayer List

Please keep the following people in your prayers ...

## TRINITY MEMBERS

Brenda Adleman	Grant Hippo
Ted Baird	Bob Hofmann
Shelby Benzel	Martha Jones
Giana Berardinelli	Sharon Kutz
Ruth Brubaker	Ken B. Myers
Church Council	Lisa Smearman
Matthew Edevane	Stephanie Yeager
Maizie Emswiler	Hamilton
Allen Everhart	
Tom Hammond	
Jennifer Hippo	

## SHUT-IN MEMBERS

Patty Auker	Shannon Kratzer
Chris Burda	Ken Kumpf
William Burda	Nora Kuntsbeck
Don Corl	Marie Laich
Gary Crownover	Clair McGregor
Val Gabriel	Leta Veit
Janet Gordon	Effie Whitfield

## ARMED FORCES

Jason Buck	Lynn Miller
Kyle Eberhart	Ian Miller
Nathan Frank	Justin Patz
Ryan Maguire	Eric Sweet



## FAMILY MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

David Aikens	John Hancuff	Sammy Page
Janet & Charlie Aungst	Ann Hanczaryk	Dennis Paulsen
Scott Aungst	Tom Haney	Frances Pringle
Tony Baker	Madeline Hanley	Tommy S. Pringle
Ralph Barry Family	Ann Hanezaryk	Lorenzo Recchia
Carolyn Bauers	John Hanezaryk family	Anita Rhodes
Dan Baughman	Brandon Harper & daughters	Donald Ruckinger
Robin Behe	David Harpster	Iverson Runk
Kris Bennett	Donald Haslam	Jeanne Rutherford
Dana Beschler	Carol Haslam	Conner Sanders
Zayne Bowmaster	Tom Hatch	Evan Sanders
Chet Boyer	Danielle Hatfield	Sanders family
Terry Brown	Karly Hey	Trudy Savine
Christopher Buchanan	Jase Hoster	Ronald Settle
John Bush	Eli Hughes	Daryl Seymore
Heather Calderwood	Samantha Januska	Lynn Shaffer
Jerry Chaplin	Wendy Miller	Marilyn Shannon
Christine Claycomb	Nicki Kaltenbrunner	Gloria Shoup
Jeff Cipriani	Barbara Keaster	Stephani Smithbower
Julian Colan	Danny Kenney	Nancy Stewart
Tracee Cole	Rebecca Kinney	Janice Streightiff
Scott Corl	Cindy Lamont	Nancy Swander
Carl Corle	Jan Lastaglia	Family
Janie Coyne	Heather Leader	Harry Taylor
Zoe Amice Jason Cramer	Stewart Logan	Wendy Toribio
Lisa Dalansky	Lou Lohsl	Lisa Turek
Jorden DeFrancisco	Joyce Longstreth	Lisa Vaughn
Nancy Dionisio	Anthony Luciano	Maureen Verzella
Gina Edevane	Linda Mardula	Jameson Joseph "JJ" Williamson
Larry Edwards	Steve Mardula Sr	Steve Wood
Autumn Emswiler	Chelsea Martin	Paul Wright
Phil Esper	Bill McClellan	Tiquan Wright
Jeannette Esper	Carmen McGonical Family	Elsa
Fink Family	Brandon McGraw	Jessie
Skyler Franell	Samanth McQuade	Junie
Misty Franell	Nancy Mock	Natalie
Nicole Gearhart	Linda Mowrer	In spoken request
Haley Gehret	Bill & Penny	"M"
Stacy Giordano	Murphy	ALBH
Billie Green	Kyle Murray	BPMC
Pat Griffith	Sharon Myers	KCB
Tish Grove	Georgie Nauser	JJM
Teresa Grum	Wyatt Nite	RDG
Thomas Hamilton	Zach Noel	BMG

Please know that you can add someone to our prayer list at any time by calling the church office (814-943-3972). When it is appropriate to remove someone from the prayer list, again, please inform the church office.



# The Orbit

March/April 2026

Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church  
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## Lectionary Readings for the Months of March & April

### March 1

Genesis 12:1-4a  
Psalm 121  
Romans 4:1-5, 13-17  
John 3:1-17

### March 8

Exodus 17:1-7  
Psalm 95  
Romans 5:1-11  
John 4:5-42

### March 15

1 Samuel 16:1-13  
Psalm 23  
Ephesians 5:8-14  
John 9:1-41

### March 22

Ezekiel 37:1-14  
Psalm 130  
Romans 8:6-11  
John 11:1-45

### March 29

Isaiah 50:4-9a  
Psalm 31:9-16  
Philippians 2:5-11  
Matthew 26:14—27:66

### April 5

Acts 10:34-43  
Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24  
Colossians 3:1-4  
Matthew 28:1-10

### April 12

Acts 2:14a, 22-32  
Psalm 16  
1 Peter 1:3-9  
John 20:19-31

### April 19

Acts 2:14a, 36-41  
Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19  
1 Peter 1:17-23  
Luke 24:13-35

### April 26

Acts 2:42-47  
Psalm 23  
1 Peter 2:19-25  
John 10:1-10

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## The next Orbit Deadline is April 15

Please get your article for the newsletter by:

- Email your article to:  
**office@trinityaltoona.com**  
**Dknee6@gmail.com**
- Drop your article in the Orbit mailbox inside the Christian Education office.

### PLEASE REMEMBER:

- All articles will be included as long as space permits.
- Articles will be edited for grammar and/or clarity where needed.
- Any article turned in after the deadline will be included in the next month's Orbit.

**Thank You!**